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ABSTRACT

A 1984 update of the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) Program is presented. Graphs and narrative descriptions cover: number of students taking AP examinations by subject areas, 1974, 1979, 1983, 1984; trends in numbers of schools giving AP Examinations (exams) for the last 25 years (at 5-year intervals), including the number of exams, number of schools giving exams, and average number of exams per AP school; the percent of exams taken by women by general subject area and by year, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984; percent of exams taken by ethnic minority students, 1979, 1984; the number of colleges receiving 25 or more AP grade reports in 1984 by region of the country and by control (public or private); the number of schools presenting 13 or more exams in 1984 by region and control; and the states in which the largest numbers of exams were given per 100 college-bound seniors. Appended is a table showing for each subject: the number of participating schools; the number of exams given for grade 10 and lower, grade 11, and grade 12; the number receiving AP grades of three or higher; and the number of colleges receiving AP grades. The data indicate that over the last 25 years the number of schools giving AP exams increased from slightly more than 500 to over 6,000. (SW)

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AP YEARBOOK 1984

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ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM®

THE COLLEGE BOARD

THE PROGRAM

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program is a cooperative educational endeavor sponsored by the College Board. Based on the fact that many young people can, with profit and delight, complete college-level studies in their secondary schools, it represents a desire of schools and colleges to foster such experiences. Like other programs of the Board, this program is national, its policies are determined by representatives of member institutions, and its operational services are provided by Educational Testing Service.

Advanced Placement serves three groups: students who wish to pursue college-level studies while still in secondary school, schools that desire to offer these opportunities, and colleges that wish to encourage and recognize such achievement. It does this by providing practical descriptions of college-level courses to interested schools and the results of examinations based on these descriptions to the colleges of the students' choice. Participating colleges, in turn, grant credit and appropriate placement, or one of these, to students who have done well on the examinations. Thus the Advanced Placement Program is an instrument of cooperation that extends the educational opportunities available to students by effectively relating college-level courses at thousands of schools to appropriate credit and placement at the colleges that the students eventually attend.

The Course Descriptions

At present, one or more course descriptions, examinations, and sets of curricular materials are available in art, biology, chemistry, computer science, English, French, German, history, Latin, mathematics, music, physics, and Spanish. Each of these offerings is the responsibility of a development committee made up of secondary school and college teachers appointed by the College Board to overlapping terms.

The Examinations

The Advanced Placement Examinations—or, in studio art, evaluations—are offered throughout the world each May. No examination is longer than three hours; some are shorter. They are administered at participating schools or at multischool centers. Any school is free to participate. All the examinations contain either an essay or problem-solving section and another section consisting of multiple-choice questions.

The Reading

In June the examinations—as well as the portfolios in studio art—are graded by several hundred college and secondary school teachers familiar with the Program, brought together especially for this purpose and serving under the direction of a Chief Reader in each field. Precautions are taken to ensure the fairness and reliability of the reading. The Chief Readers—college professors who sit with the development committees and later direct the reading—develop initial grading standards in consultation with their immediate assistants. The other readers then join in the determination of more detailed expectations.

The Grades

The Chief Readers bring to the grading process the same standards that are applied in developing the examinations.

The readers judgments on the essay questions are combined with the results of the multiple-choice questions, and the total raw scores are converted by the Chief Readers to the Program's five-point scale: 5—Extremely well qualified. 4—Well qualified. 3–Qualified. 2–Possibly qualified. 1–No recommendation.

In early July the grades are reported to the students, their secondary schools, and the colleges they are entering.

The Student and the College

Although the Program provides a curricular guide and examination in each field, all colleges do not follow the same, or even similar, procedures upon receipt of Advanced Placement Examination grades. Many colleges grant credit and placement automatically for qualifying work on the examinations; some grant either placement or credit only; others are still establishing their policies.

Further information about the Advanced Placement Program may be obtained from Harlan P. Hanson, Director, Advanced Placement Program, The College Board, 888 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10106; or from the appropriate regional office of the College Board, listed on the inside back cover.

Additional copies of this booklet can be obtained from the director of the Advanced Placement Program at the above address.

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AP YEARBOOK 1984

The Advanced Placement Program celebrates the completion of its twenty-ninth year and the beginning of its thirtieth anniversary year with the introduction of this first annual yearbook. As 1984 turns into 1985 the Program looks back on participation during the past year and its relation to preceding years, as well as toward expectations of growth for the years ahead, not only for the Program but more important for the students, teachers, schools, and colleges it serves and from which it derives its continuing strength. To depict AP in 1984 and prior years, the tables and figures in this report provide comparative information at several intervals in time, but most frequently for 1974 and 1978. With respect to the future, the Advanced Placement Program looks forward to students throughout the nation and, indeed, the world, challenging more than a quarter million examinations for the first time in the Program's 30-year history.

1984 HIGHLIGHTS

In May 1984 a total of 177,406 students took Advanced Placement Examinations. This represents an increase of 19,453 candidates or 12 percent over the number in 1983, and a 191 percent increase over the number of candidates just ten years ago.

The number of schools offering the Advanced Placement Program to its students increased by 446 over the year before, a record one-year growth in secondary school participation since the beginning of the Program. The once experimental program involving 104 schools achieved participation by 6,272 schools (76 percent public and 24 percent nonpublic) in 1984, an increase of 8 percent in participating schools over the previous year. This growth is shown in Tables 1A and 1B and in Figure 1A.

A total of 239,666 Advanced Placement Examinations were administered this past May (236,599 in United States high schools), an increase of 13 percent over the number of examinations administered in 1983. The number of Advanced Placement Examinations taken by students has more than tripled during the past ten years, and has increased by more than 70 percent during the past five. The gains in use of the Program's services in 1984 continued a long-standing trend with strong program participation reflected in each of six broad subject areas: History, English, art and music, foreign languages, mathematics and computer science, and the sciences.

FIGURE 1A
AP STUDENTS AND EXAMINATIONS—
1974, 1979, 1983, 1984

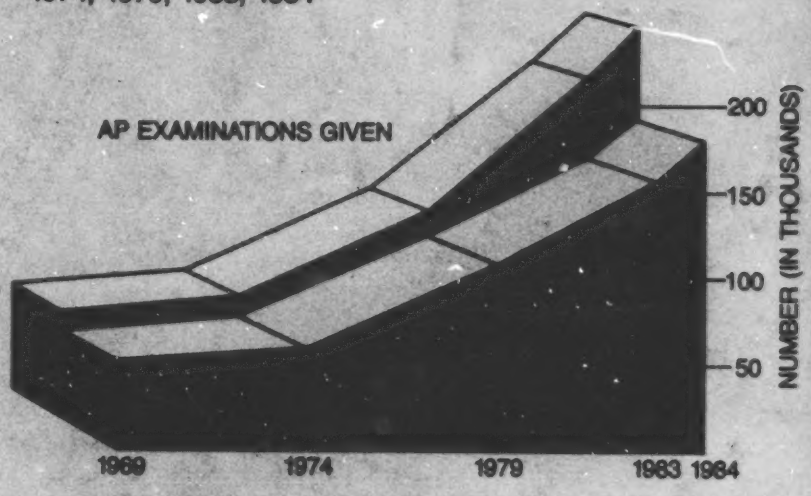


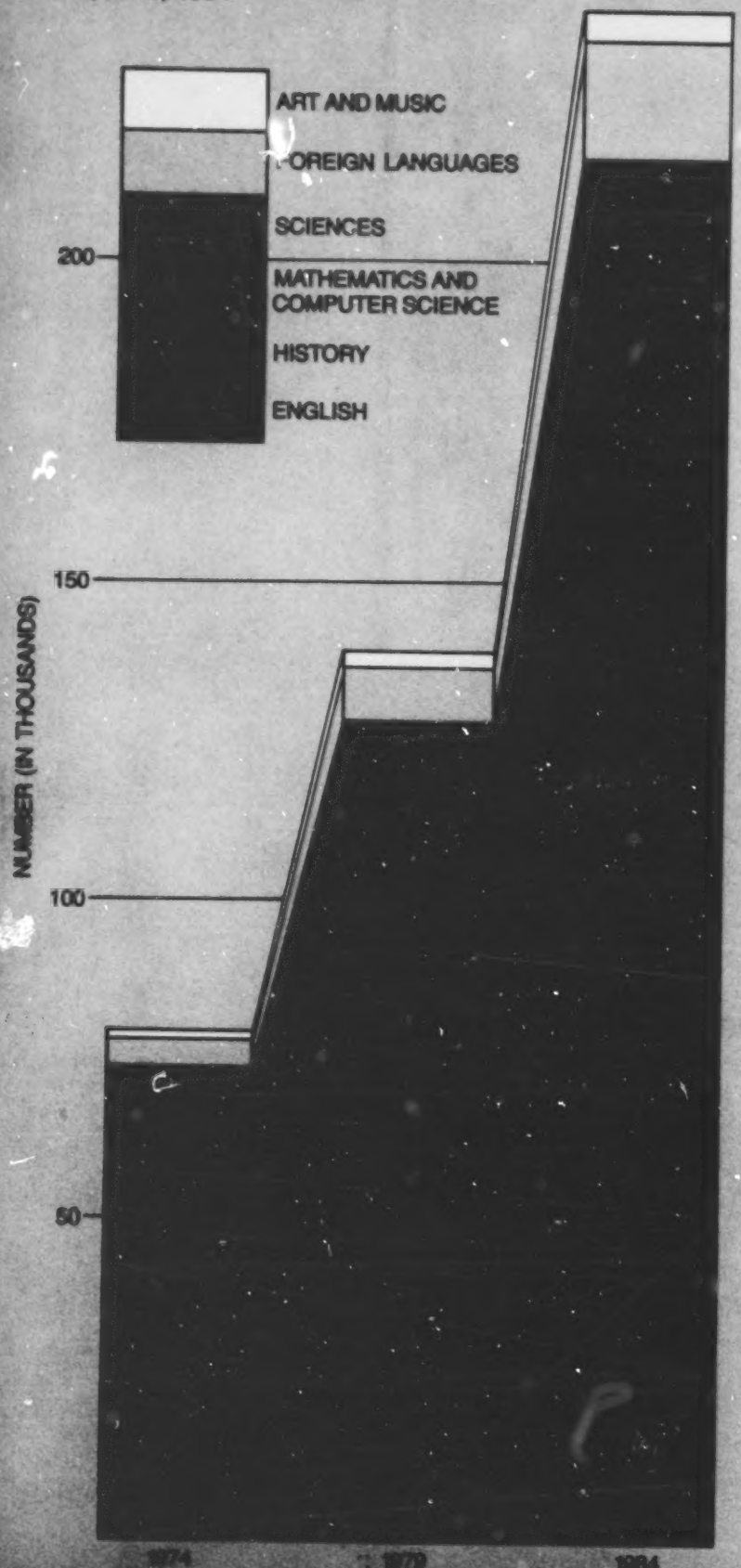
TABLE 1A
AP STUDENTS AND EXAMINATIONS—1974, 1979, 1983, 1984

	TEN YEARS AGO (1974)	FIVE YEARS AGO (1979)	LAST YEAR (1983)	THIS YEAR (1984)
Number of Students Taking AP Examinations	60,863	106,052	157,973	177,406
Subject Areas				
History	18,287	35,183	55,357	62,548
English	24,131	41,975	65,260	71,263
Art and Music	1,060	2,213	2,902	3,157
Foreign Languages	5,545	10,556	16,681	19,168
Mathematics and Computer Science	16,038	24,727	35,489	41,224
Sciences	13,955	24,890	35,471	39,306
Number of Examinations All Subjects	79,036	139,544	211,160	239,666

TABLE 1B
PERCENTAGE INCREASES—1984 VS. PRIOR YEARS

	OVER 10 YEARS	OVER 5 YEARS	OVER 1 YEAR
Students Taking AP Examinations	191	67	12
Subject Areas			
History	242	78	13
English	195	70	9
Art and Music	192	43	9
Foreign Languages	246	82	15
Mathematics and Computer Science	176	79	25
Sciences	182	58	11
Number of Examinations All Subjects	203	72	13

FIGURE 1B
AP EXAMINATIONS BY SUBJECT AREA—
1974, 1979, 1984



AP Examinations were administered in 24 specific subjects including computer science. In this its initial year, 4,262 students challenged AP Computer Science, with 915 secondary schools administering the examination, ranking it tenth among all 24 AP Examinations administered this past year. In all AP Examinations administered last year, 70 percent of the grades awarded were 3 or higher on the AP scale of 1 to 5. Thus a large proportion of students who took AP Examinations attained grades recognized by most colleges as college-level performance.

A profile of 1984 participation in AP for each of the examinations is given in the Appendix. Trends in numbers of students taking AP Examinations in each of six broad subject areas over the last ten years are displayed in Figure 1B.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT TRENDS

Long-term increases in AP use can be attributed both to increases in the numbers of schools giving AP Examinations, and to increases in the average number of AP Examinations given within participating schools. These trends are shown in Table 2 and Figure 2 for the last 25 years (at five-year intervals).

During this time the number of schools giving AP Examinations increased from a little more than 500 to over 6,000. Currently, over one-quarter of the secondary schools in the United States give AP Examinations. Approximately three-quarters of these participating schools are public. Also over the last 25 years, the average number of examinations given per participating school has more than doubled—from 15 to 38.

In addition to growth in the number of schools participating in the AP Program and the availability of AP to progressively larger proportions of students within participating schools, students attempting AP Examinations continue to experience high levels of success. As noted earlier, 70 percent of the grades awarded this year were 3 or higher. The fact that this success rate has remained relatively constant for many years suggests that the Program's limits have not been reached and that greater numbers of students could successfully attempt college-level work in yet other high schools by taking AP courses, with many receiving recognition and credit for this work by taking AP Examinations.

FIGURE 2
GROWTH IN AP USE

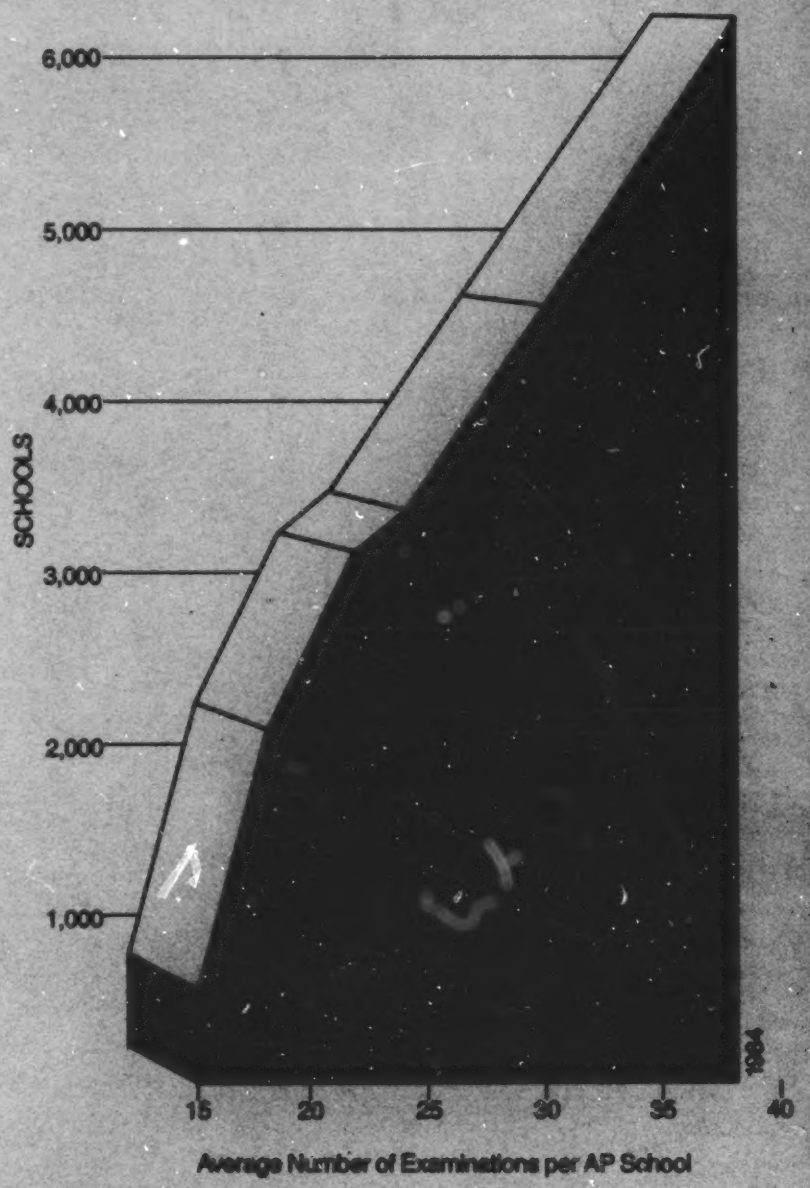


TABLE 2
AP EXAMINATIONS AND PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS—TRENDS OVER 25 YEARS

YEAR	NUMBER OF EXAMINATIONS	SCHOOLS GIVING EXAMINATIONS	AVERAGE NUMBER OF EXAMINATIONS PER AP SCHOOL
1959	8,265	560	15
1964	37,829	2,066	18
1969	69,418	3,095	22
1974	79,036	3,357	24
1979	133,544	4,585	30
1984	239,666	6,273	38

FIGURE 3
PERCENTAGE OF AP EXAMINATIONS TAKEN BY WOMEN, 1970-1984

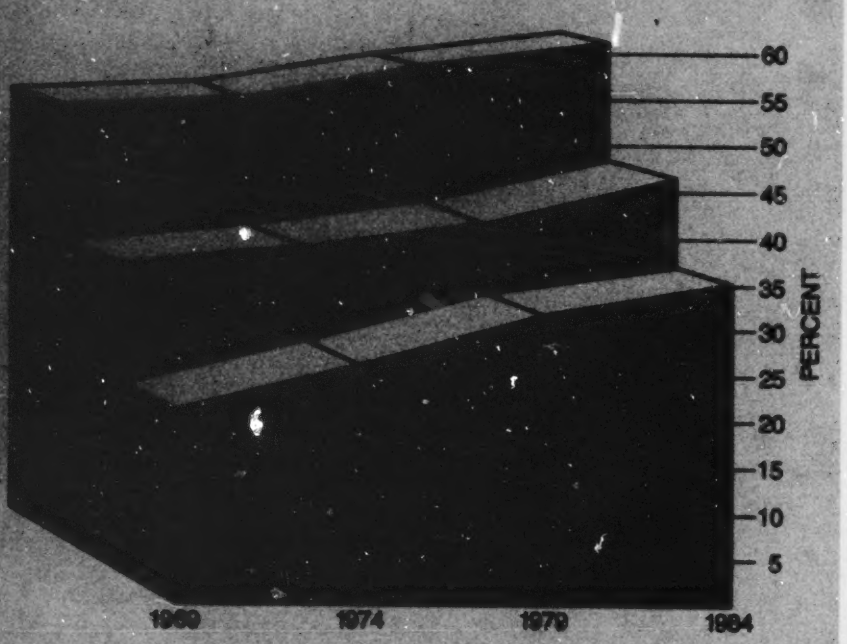


TABLE 3
PERCENT OF AP EXAMINATIONS TAKEN BY WOMEN BY GENERAL SUBJECT AREA AND BY YEAR

SUBJECT AREA	YEAR			
	1969	1974	1979	1984
History	37	39	42	46
English	54	55	58	59
Art and Music	—	64	57	58
Foreign Languages	56	60	60	61
Mathematics and Computer Science	21	28	32	35
Sciences	24	28	32	36
All Subjects	40	41	45	48

TABLE 3A
PERCENT OF AP EXAMINATIONS TAKEN BY STUDENTS IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES WITH ETHNIC GROUPS

GROUP	1979	1984
Black	3	3
Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Hispanic	2	3
Asian American	6	8
American Indian, Eskimo	0	0
Subtotal for Ethnic Minorities	11	15
White/Caucasian	88	84
Other	2	1
Total respondents	104,028	196,912

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.

PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN

Over the last fifteen years, the percentage of AP Examinations taken by women has increased from about 40 percent to 48 percent, that is, to nearly half of all examinations taken. In English, art and music, and foreign language, the percentage of AP Examinations taken by women has ranged between 54 and 64 percent during this 15-year period. The strongest gains, however, have been in mathematics (up from 21 percent in 1969 to 35 percent in 1984), in sciences (up from 24 percent in 1969 to 36 percent in 1984), and in history (up from 37 percent in 1969 to 46 percent in 1984). These trends are displayed in Table 3 and Figure 3.

PARTICIPATION BY MINORITIES

Since 1979, blacks and Hispanics have maintained and increased their ratios of participation as more students and schools join the program, with many of the students in schools having predominantly minority enrollments. Minority educators report that the effect AP can have on any secondary school curriculum is especially noticeable in schools with large minority enrollments.

For example, Joe Arriaga, principal of Southside High School in San Antonio, Texas (approximately 70 percent Mexican-American enrollment) reports that the combination of wider use of the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test and the introduction three years ago of AP has led to curriculum reform down through the eighth grade. A new sequence of mathematics and science courses was established so that more students would be better prepared for college and the most able among them would be ready for AP courses in those subjects. One result of all this, Mr. Arriaga said, is that in three years the number of students studying chemistry has increased from 8 to 60.

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

In 1984 students taking AP Examinations asked that their AP grades be sent to 2,153 colleges in the United States and abroad. Of these colleges, a total of 618 were sent 25 or more reports (ranging from 25 to more than 4,000 reports per college). This group of colleges received about 95 percent of all AP reports sent. Of this group, 613 were colleges located in the United States. Table 4A shows these colleges by region of the country and by control (public or private).

In general, the colleges were fairly evenly divided between public (48 percent) and private (54 percent), and each of four regions of the country accounted for about one-fifth or more of the total group. (Private colleges predominate in the northeast, if only because there are, proportionately speaking, a large number of such colleges there.) It is clear that AP students attend a wide range of colleges with respect to both geographic location and administrative control.

The range of AP schools is similarly broad: 3,749 United States secondary schools accounted for 95 percent of the 1984 AP Examinations. Table 4B shows that their geographic distribution was almost precisely the same as that of their students' colleges, the only difference being the magnitude of the public sector. Thus, for example, one sees that slightly more than half (1,897) these major AP schools were public high schools in the South, Midwest, and West.

FIGURE 4
COLLEGES RECEIVING 25 OR MORE AP REPORTS AND SCHOOLS PRESENTING 13 OR MORE AP EXAMINATIONS

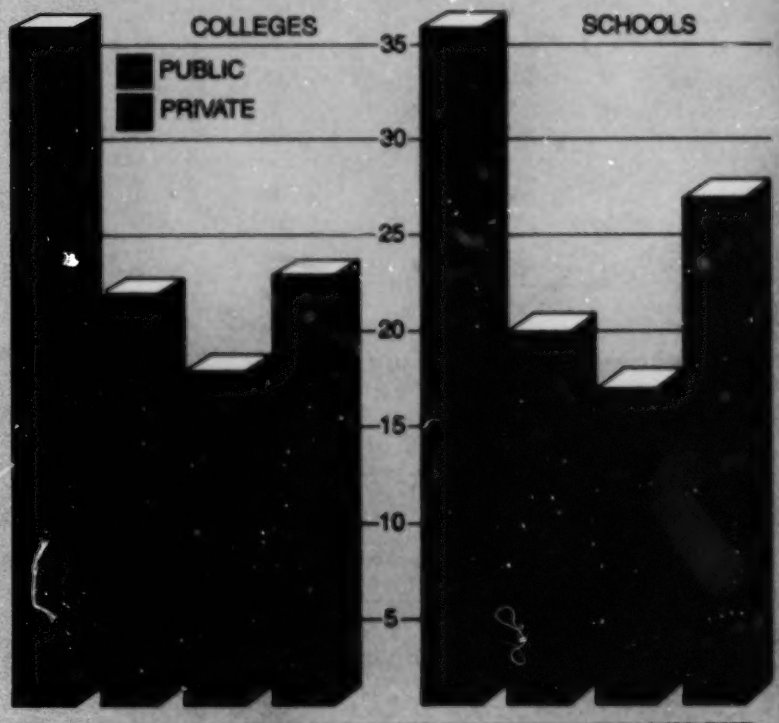


TABLE 4A
COLLEGES RECEIVING 25 OR MORE AP GRADE REPORTS IN 1984

GEOGRAPHIC REGION	PUBLIC NO.	PUBLIC %	PRIVATE NO.	PRIVATE %	TOTAL NO.	TOTAL %
*Northeast	71	12	152	25	223	36
South	76	12	58	9	134	22
Midwest	52	8	61	10	113	18
**West	86	14	57	9	143	23
Total	285	46	328	54	613	100

*Includes the College Board's Middle States and New England Regions
**Includes the College Board's Southwestern and Western Regions

TABLE 4B
SCHOOLS PRESENTING 13 OR MORE AP EXAMINATIONS IN 1984

GEOGRAPHIC REGION	PUBLIC NO.	PUBLIC %	PRIVATE NO.	PRIVATE %	TOTAL NO.	TOTAL %
*Northeast	953	25	414	11	1,367	36
South	597	16	160	4	757	20
Midwest	478	13	142	4	620	17
**West	822	22	183	5	1,005	27
Total United States	2,850	76	899	24	3,749	100

*Includes the College Board's Middle States and New England Regions
**Includes the College Board's Southwestern and Western Regions

FIGURE 5
VARIATION IN AP USE AMONG STATES

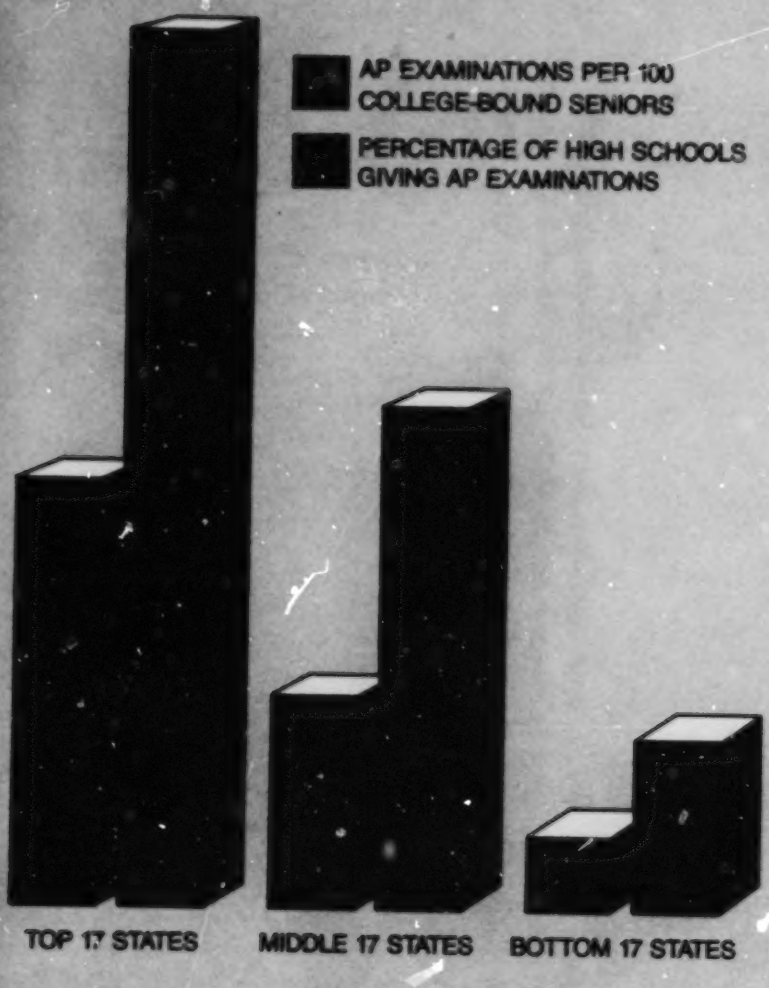

AP EXAMINATIONS PER 100 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS
PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOLS GIVING AP EXAMINATIONS
TOP 17 STATES
MIDDLE 17 STATES
BOTTOM 17 STATES

TABLE 5
VARIATION IN ACCESS TO THE ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM

	ESTIMATED NUMBER COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS	NUMBER OF AP EXAMINATIONS GIVEN	EXAMS PER 100 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS	TOTAL NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS	SCHOOLS GIVING AP EXAMINATIONS	PERCENT GIVING AP EXAMINATIONS
Total U.S.	1,700,600	236,605	14	22,902	6,128	27
Top 17 States	675,500	152,163	22	6,978	3,160	45
Middle 17 States	659,800	71,588	11	8,926	2,337	26
Bottom 17 States	362,300	12,854	4	6,998	631	9

Note: States include the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The states were ranked by number of AP Examinations given per 100 college-bound seniors and then divided into the three groups shown.

CURRENT PARTICIPATION AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITY

In both the national scope of the AP Program and the substantial growth over the years in numbers of examinations taken, there is considerable variation among the states in the degree to which students have access to AP services.

In comparing use of AP across states, it is necessary to take into account the fact that some states are much larger than others: use of AP Examinations within a state should be looked at in relation to some measure of the number of students in the state. Since students taking AP usually plan to attend college, it seems reasonable to measure state use of AP in relation to the estimated total number of college-bound seniors attending high schools in the state.

In 1984, a total of 236,599 AP Examinations were taken in United States high schools, and it is estimated that approximately 1,700,600 college-bound high school seniors attended these schools. Thus about 14 AP Examinations were given per 100 college-bound seniors.

The 17 states (including the District of Columbia) in which the largest numbers of AP Examinations were given per 100 college-bound seniors are:

Alaska	Florida	New York
California	Hawaii	South Carolina
Colorado	Maryland	Utah
Connecticut	Massachusetts	Vermont
Delaware	New Hampshire	Virginia
District of Columbia	New Jersey	

For this group of 17 states, the number of AP Examinations given per 100 college-bound seniors was 22 (with a range of 15 to 46). In contrast, the number for the middle 17 states was 11 per 100 college-bound seniors, or one-half that for the top group. In the bottom 17 states, 4 AP Examinations were given per 100 college-bound seniors, less than one-fifth the rate for the top group.

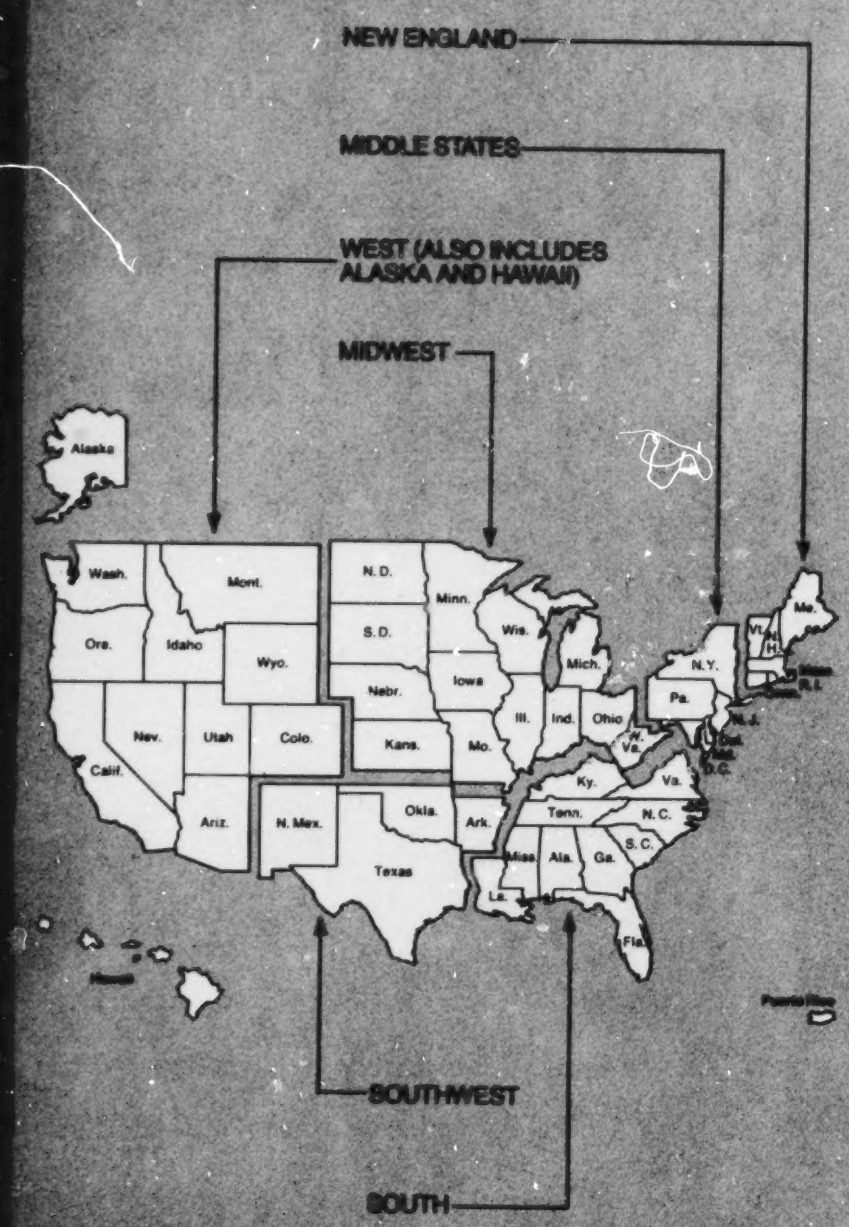
Variation in the use of AP is also evident in the percentages of schools giving AP Examinations in these groups of states. In the top group, 45 percent of the high schools gave AP Examinations in 1984; in the middle group, this figure was 26 percent (again approximately half that of the highest ranking group); in the bottom group, the figure was 9 percent (again about one-fifth that of the top group).

APPENDIX

PROFILE OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM PARTICIPATION 1984

SUBJECTS	PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS	AP EXAMINATIONS GIVEN				AP GRADES OF 3 OR HIGHER		COLLEGES RECEIVING AP GRADES
		10TH GRADE AND LOWER	11TH GRADE	12TH GRADE	TOTAL	NUMBER	%	
American History	3,254	1,256	37,862	10,154	49,939	32,955	66	1,319
European History	1,221	2,744	2,371	7,295	12,609	9,222	73	822
Subtotal: History		4,000	40,233	17,449	62,548	42,177	67	
English Language and Composition	1,512	61	2,758	7,356	10,294	6,479	63	937
English Literature and Composition	4,477	85	1,555	58,322	60,969	42,342	69	1,634
Subtotal: English		46	4,313	65,678	71,263	48,821	69	
Art History	199	52	208	962	1,264	938	74	246
Studio Art—Drawing	116	6	59	220	285	224	79	133
Studio Art—General	256	4	90	872	987	780	79	296
Music Listening and Literature	71	9	44	138	194	134	69	95
Music Theory	194	30	95	302	427	287	67	177
Subtotal: Art and Music		101	496	2,494	3,157	2,363	75	
French Language	1,216	217	1,303	3,677	5,272	3,615	69	491
French Literature	298	35	246	1,259	1,571	1,146	73	218
German Language	601	99	285	1,199	1,631	1,215	74	351
Latin/Vergil	250	137	622	502	1,285	883	69	189
Latin/Catullus, Horace	95	10	146	263	419	325	78	110
Spanish Language	1,393	335	1,799	4,866	7,032	5,433	77	672
Spanish Literature	301	45	357	1,513	1,958	1,544	79	337
Subtotal: Foreign Languages		878	4,758	13,279	19,168	14,161	74	
Calculus AB	3,525	230	2,300	28,053	30,583	21,965	72	1,103
Calculus BC	1,136	159	928	8,292	9,379	7,118	76	482
Computer Science	915	188	922	3,094	4,262	2,939	69	475
Subtotal: Mathematics		577	4,150	39,439	44,224	32,022	72	
Biology	2,207	2,137	5,058	12,026	19,387	14,500	75	1,001
Chemistry	1,645	313	3,911	7,154	11,539	7,876	68	675
Physics B	653	57	1,013	2,569	3,682	2,483	67	400
Physics C—Mechanics	547	22	189	2,560	2,780	2,089	75	274
Physics C—Electricity/Magnetism	384	19	99	1,800	1,918	1,332	69	226
Subtotal: Science		2,548	10,270	26,109	39,306	28,280	72	
ALL SUBJECTS	6,273	8,250	64,220	164,448	239,666	167,824	70	2,153
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS		7,656	54,275	111,674	177,406			

Note: The total column includes students for whom grade levels were not indicated or were beyond the high school level.



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